



STATE OF MICHIGAN

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

GREG R. WHITE
COMMISSIONER

JOHN D. QUACKENBUSH
CHAIRMAN

SALLY A. TALBERG
COMMISSIONER

Received & Inspected

JUN 22 2015

FCC Mail Room
MIKE ZIMMER
DIRECTOR

June 15, 2015

Marlene H. Dortch
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Karen Majcher
Vice President, High Cost and Low Income Division
Universal Service Administration Company
2000 L Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

Re: Midwest Energy Cooperative d/b/a Midwest Connections. Certification of Census Blocks for Universal Service Support, Pursuant to Section 214(e)(2) of the Federal Communications Act of 1996, Federal Communications Commission CC Docket No. 96-45, CC Docket No. 09-197, WC Docket No. 10-90

Dear Ms. Dortch and Ms. Majcher:

Pursuant to the requirements of 47 C.F.R. § 54.201, the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) hereby certifies to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Universal Administrative Company (USAC) that Midwest Energy Cooperative d/b/a Midwest Connections (Midwest) has met the current standards for state Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) designation, for the purposes of receiving High-Cost support only in its certified areas. This designation is for the remainder of 2015.

Attached is the MPSC Order approving the application of Midwest in case U-17861, as well as the census blocks in Midwest's area.

Sincerely,

Robin P. Ancona

Robin P. Ancona, Director
Telecommunications Division

Attachments

- Midwest ETC Order (U-17861)
- Service Area – Page 15

Copies rec'd 0
List ABCDE

Cc: Ryan McAnany
Barry Harmon

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STATE OF MICHIGAN
BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

* * * * *

In the matter of the application of)
MIDWEST ENERGY COOPERATIVE, d/b/a)
MIDWEST CONNECTIONS, for designation as an)
eligible telecommunications carrier in the state of)
Michigan.)
_____)

Case No. U-17861

At the June 3, 2015 meeting of the Michigan Public Service Commission in Lansing,
Michigan.

PRESENT: Hon. John D. Quackenbush, Chairman
Hon. Greg R. White, Commissioner
Hon. Sally A. Talberg, Commissioner

ORDER

On March 19, 2015, Midwest Energy Cooperative, d/b/a Midwest Connections (Midwest) filed an application pursuant to Section 214(e)(2) of the federal Communications Act of 1934, 47 USC 214(e)(2), for designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) for access to universal service fund (USF) support for the purpose of participating in Rural Broadband funding opportunities and providing service to High-Cost areas only. Midwest filed supplemental information on May 5 and 20, 2015.

Midwest requests that the Commission enter an order designating it as an ETC for purposes of High-Cost support only. Midwest will not be seeking reimbursement for Lifeline or Link-up at this time, although Midwest will provide Lifeline services pursuant to the directives of the Michigan Telecommunications Act and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Midwest currently offers facilities-based and resold local exchange voice over internet protocol (VoIP) services in conjunction with its partner Big River Telephone and through use of its own facilities. On March 4, 2015, Midwest was awarded a \$211,532 grant through the FCC's Rural Broadband Experiment program to provide broadband internet service to 31 census blocks within Midwest's service area. Receiving the Rural Broadband grant is contingent upon Midwest's designation as an ETC. Midwest obtained a license to provide basic local exchange service on March 18, 2014, in Case No. U-17512.

Midwest has historically been an energy utility, and it does not have the facilities or network infrastructure typical of most providers of basic local exchange service. Due to the uniqueness of the situation, the Commission's Telecommunications Division Staff (Staff) found it necessary to submit questions to Midwest regarding the details of the application, service, and facilities. These inquiries resulted in the filing of supplemental information in the docket. The Staff also consulted with FCC staff regarding the application. The Staff recommends that the application be granted.

After reviewing Midwest's application and supplemental filings, the Commission finds that the ETC designation, limited to High-Cost support only, should be granted. The Commission is persuaded that ETC designation for Midwest promotes the availability of universal service and is in the public interest. The Commission finds that the application demonstrates that Midwest meets the requirements for designation as an ETC. The application for ETC designation is granted on condition that Midwest comply with the service requirements contained in FCC Report and Order 11-161 (rel'd October 27, 2011) and subsequent rulings, the *Lifeline Reform Order*,¹ and the

¹ *In the Matter of Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization* (WC Docket No.11-42), *Lifeline and Link Up* (WC Docket No. 03-109), *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service* (CC Docket No. 96-45), *Advancing Broadband Availability through Digital Literacy Training* (WC Docket No. 12-23), Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Order No. FCC 12-11, rel'd February 6, 2012 (*Lifeline Reform Order*).

Commission's December 20, 2012 and January 17, 2013 orders in Case Nos. U-14535, U-16959, and U-17815. This approval is for the remainder of 2015. Midwest will be required to re-certify in July of 2015 in Case No. U-17815, and annually thereafter.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that the application filed by Midwest Energy Cooperative, d/b/a Midwest Connections, for designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier for purposes of High-Cost universal service support is approved.

The Commission reserves jurisdiction and may issue further orders as necessary.

Any party aggrieved by this order may file an action in the appropriate federal District Court pursuant to 28 USC 1331. To notify the Commission of an appeal, appellants shall send required notices to both the Commission's Executive Secretary and to the Commission's Legal Counsel. Electronic notifications should be sent to the Executive Secretary at mpscedockets@michigan.gov and to the Michigan Department of the Attorney General - Public Service Division at pungpl@michigan.gov. In lieu of electronic submissions, paper copies of such notifications may be sent to the Executive Secretary and the Attorney General - Public Service Division at 7109 West Saginaw Hwy, Lansing, MI 48917.

MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



John D. Quackenbush, Chairman



Greg R. White, Commissioner



Sally A. Talberg, Commissioner

By its action of June 3, 2015.



Mary Jo Kunkle, Executive Secretary

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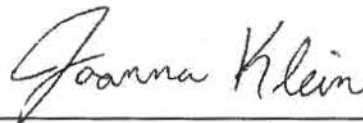
PROOF OF SERVICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

Case No. U-17861

County of Ingham)

Joanna Klein being duly sworn, deposes and says that on June 3, 2015 A.D. she served a copy of the attached Commission order by first class mail, postage prepaid, or by inter-departmental mail, to the persons as shown on the attached service list.



Joanna Klein

Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 3rd day of June 2015



Steven J. Cook
Notary Public, Ingham County, Michigan
As acting in Eaton County
My Commission Expires: April 30, 2018

Service List U-17861

Mr. Shaun M. Johnson
Dykema Gossett PLLC
Capitol View
201 Townsend Street, Suite 900
Lansing MI 48933

Midwest Energy Cooperative
Robert L. Hance, President & CEO
901 East State Street
P.O. Box 127
Cassopolis MI 49031